



BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

OECD Conference Centre, 21-22 February 2013  
 Meeting of providers of OECD Income Distribution Data  
[www.oecd.org/social/soc/inequality-meeting2013.htm](http://www.oecd.org/social/soc/inequality-meeting2013.htm)

## 4.2 Correction for item non-response

### Types of non-response

**Table 3.2 Types of non-response**

Problem	Description	Common solution
(1) Unit non-response	Failure to obtain any information on a sample household, including the household interview and personal interviews in the household	Weighting
(2) Partial unit non-response	Failure to obtain a personal interview with a subset of the eligible adults in a household	Weighting or full-case imputation
(3) Item non-response	Failure to obtain some target variables in an otherwise completed interview (this generally affects non-income variables in register countries and all – especially income – variables in survey countries).	Imputation for missing items
(4) Partial item non-response	Refers to the situation when some but not all the information is obtained on a target variable. The most important case is that of detailed income components: a part of the component may be missing, and/or conversion may be required from the collected net to the required gross amount.	Imputation for the missing part

Source: Verma and Betti, 2010

Source: Canberra Group - Handbook on household income statistics (2<sup>nd</sup> edition - 2011) – page 30



[www.oecd.org/social/inequality-database.htm](http://www.oecd.org/social/inequality-database.htm) >Methods and Concepts

## From Canberra (2011)

- Country practices:
  - EU-SILC 2009 : differences between countries:
    - BEL CZE EST FRA ITA AUT POL SPA UK apply full-case imputation
    - DEU GRC PRT SVK apply an adjustment factor to total income based on characteristics of the household
    - IRL LUX NLD HUN deleted all households with one or more missing persons
  - Australia: ABS imputes information for partial non-response when (1) income or other data in a questionnaire are missing from one or more non-significant person's records or (2) all key questions are answered by the significant person(s) but other data are missing
- Non-response for individual components generally below 10%, sometimes higher for self-employment and capital income (Canberra, p50, Table 5 page 150)



## From OECD data reviews:

- YES, in: AUS, AUT (EU-SILC), CHL, EST, FIN, FRA, KOR, SVN (HBS), SWE, TUR (HILCS) – and:
  - DEU: SOEP Frick & Grabka 2010 (next presentation)
  - LUX: Four generic models based on the « Imputation and Variance Estimation » developed by the University of Michigan. Next to these models, specific procedures (simulation, regressions, deductions) have been used for certain income components
  - NZL: introduced in 2009/10 and applied back to 2006/7
  - POL: HBS: households were replaced
  - PRT: EU-SILC: through regression method
  - USA: CPS: hot-deck imputation
- NONE (as reported), in:
  - HUN: Household Monitor Survey: Missing data on specific income types are not imputed



EU-SILC: for Greece & Spain (in contradiction with Canberra Box 3.4)

## For discussion

- To which extent treatment on item non-response may have had an impact on country-estimates ?
- Should we investigate more on practices for items non-response to improve cross-country comparability ?
- Should the OECD Terms of Reference (ToR) include recommendations on non-response ? (currently none)

